

DECEMBER 2024

Splash!

*"Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst."
John 4:14*



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MERRY CHRISTMAS



9201 E Happy Valley Road / Scottsdale, AZ 85255

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- Eric Brash—Health Concerns
- Barbara Brooks—Health Concerns
- Lizzy Caddow (Friend of Diane Salinas)—Cancer
- Christi (Daughter of Charlie and Sue Boyd)—Health Concerns
- Angelika Dumpf (Wife of Brett Stone)—Health Concerns
- Jenna Fjeld—Health Concerns
- Dave and Joy Gallimore—Health Concerns
- Frank Gasparino—Health Concerns
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- Gabriele Laudenschlager—Health Concerns
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- Prentice Powers (Marty Lindert's brother)—Health Concerns
- Rebecca (Melissa Freesh's sister)—Health Concerns
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- Kathie Roegnik—Health Concerns
- Ruth Schlesinger—Health Concern
- Bob Ulland—Health Concerns
- Michael Umland (Son of Steve & Sue Umland)—Health Concerns
- Peter Vasiliades (Nephew of Rick Sherrin)—Health Concerns
- Don Martin (Friend of Ron and Karen Roessler)—Health Concerns
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- Del Rogge—Health Concerns
- Jeff & Eric Bembry (friends of Diane vanMaanen)—Health Concerns
- Pastor Michael Dubsy (friend of Frances DeBruyn)—Health Concerns

Send your prayer requests to prayer@lwlcw.org or fill out a card in the Narthex.

**If it is time to remove someone from the prayer list, please contact the front office.*

A Message from Pastor Mark

There is that saying in life that directs us not to judge another until we have walked in that persons' shoes. Simply put, until we can live out the life experiences of another, we should refrain from judging them and their actions. It is advice that probably should be taken more often. Living in a world that is filled with self important, arrogant folks who would be better suited looking at their own lives as opposed to the lives of the people they judge and condemn, we all would be well suited to base our concern of the world over our action as opposed to judging what others may or may not do. But no matter what our level of empathy may be, or how much empathy toward others we lack, there is still the predilection toward judgment. We judge those who are different that ourselves. Those of a different religion, a different nationality, a different sexual orientation, a different skin color, a different home situation. We make judgements about the life experiences of others we have not lived and quite often can never live. And there is nothing fair nor kind nor Christian in doing so.

But this is really not about our need to judge that which we cannot understand but rather it is about those times we do find ourselves inexplicably placed in the shoes of others. Sometimes the shoes are those of people we know, sometimes they are the shoes of people in a defined group. More often than not, we find ourselves in the shoes of others, not because we are attempting to gain insight into their plight, but because we have been thrown into a similar situation. I find myself very close to stepping into a pair of these strange shoes. I have been in these shoes before, but these ones seem much larger and somewhat unwieldy.

Less than a week from this writing I will find myself in the Mayo Clinic, not doing the ministry of pastoral care to those who are patients within the walls, but as a patient myself. Even though I am yet to wear these shoes, I can tell by looking at them they do not fit me very well. They look too large, as if they will be difficult to wear, and I don't want to put them on. But as with many – if not all – who are forced to wear these shoes, none of them fit too well. They all cause a certain degree of pain and discomfort.

My hope is that in the end, surgery will eradicate the pain and discomfort associated with my back. As the surgeon resets the misplaced vertebrae and wires me back together, the goal is a relief from that which has beset me. But even with that hope, there are certain misgivings I have and those misgivings are based on a lack of faith – at least the lack of a fullness of faith – that I have concerning the medical world. It is not that I do not feel comfortable about my surgeon, but rather it is found with in the knowledge that I hold that things can go wrong. And so as the day draws closer the knot located in my stomach grows larger.

continued....

A Message from Pastor Mark

But what unties that knot and has the ability to loosen up all the binds me and holds me back is my faith. It is not a faith based on accomplishments or standing. It is not a faith based on knowledge and understanding. It is solely a faith based on love – not the imperfect, inconsistent love I hold for God, but the perfect and never changing love that God holds for me. It is a faith that was placed in my life upon my baptism, and allows me to understand God's presence in my life. It is the faith of a child of God that long has allowed me to pray;

*Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray thee Lord my soul to keep
And should I die before I wake
I pray thee Lord my soul to take*

It is a prayer that speaks to the faith and trust we hold. It is a prayer that reminds us, that when the shoes are ones which we would chose not to wear and the knot in the stomach begins to tighten, that God's presence in our lives remains strong and true. It is a prayer which reflects the faith in which we live – the faith that fills and surrounds our lives.

Pastor Mark



*Living Water Lutheran Church
Choir and Guest Orchestra
Present*

A New and Glorious Morn!

Sunday, December 22 at 10:00am



Ask Zeke



DECEMBER

Living Water's 24/7 office fish suggests a truly unique gift idea

Q. Most people on my Christmas gift list already have everything they need. Any suggestions?

A. It sounds like you're fishing for a fresh holiday shopping strategy. I think I've got the perfect solution for you. You're gonna love it.

I'm guessing you didn't see the article about the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's unique Good Gifts program in last month's *CONNECTIONS*. This creative ELCA program is exactly what you need. Good Gifts is an ultra-easy option. It's also a surefire win-win-win solution in another respect. As the *CONNECTIONS* write-up said, "Each ELCA Good Gift changes at least three lives: the life of the person helped by your gift, the life of your friend or loved one, and your own life."

Good Gifts shopping is fun. You can pick up a Good Gifts catalog and gift cards at Living Water every Sunday during Advent. The catalog features scores of sure-to-please choices for hard-to-buy-for people. You can also shop online (ELCA.org/goodgifts) or order gifts by phone (800-638-3522).

As you've probably figured out, the Good Gifts "store" isn't your average shopping experience. Its unique gifts help to "grow the church, fight hunger, and transform lives." Shopping is a breeze. You'll have fun choosing from dozens of gifts, including the ever-popular chicks (\$10) and piglets (\$30). For example, you could purchase a rooster (\$15) for your dad, honeybees (\$20) for your mom, and a goat (\$50) for a good friend.

So, forget about crowds and trying to find a parking place. Simply grab your credit card or checkbook, put your feet up, and order these "gifts that make a difference." Your tax-deductible donations will be used as needed for ELCA-supported projects worldwide. Last year LWLC worshippers gave and received over \$4,500. Let's make 2024 another banner year. Please let Cindy and Ron Ophaug know about your gifts – both given and received – so they can track this year's total.

Do you have a question for Zeke? E-mail it to him at AskZeke@cox.net or contact his writing partner, Jill Wehr, at 480-710-4506.

Great Gatherings

Annual Advent Party



Saturday, December 14
5:00 to 7:30 PM
Spirit of the Desert
\$30 per person*

* payable by check
(includes appetizer, entrée, sides, dessert & gratuity)

Coffee, tea & soft drinks provided; bring your own wine or beer if you wish.

Note: Please make checks payable to: Living Water Lutheran Church and write "Advent Dinner" in memo line. (By no later than November 28)

For questions, please call Marty Lindert at 602-284-5704 or Linda Hoenig at 480-766-0816.

All are welcome!

ELCA GOOD GIFTS

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is a church that is called to do God's work in the world, Together as the ELCA, we do more than we could ever do alone: grow our congregations, inspire new leaders and care for those around the world who live with hunger and poverty. ELCA Good Gifts are a creative way to do just that.

Your gifts go beyond your regular congregational offering to support the ministries of the ELCA that mean the most to you and your loved ones. Each ELCA Good Gift changes at least three lives: the life of the person helped by you gift, the life of your friend or loved one, and your own.

CATALOGS, GIFT CARDS, STICKERS, COIN BOXES, IDEAS will all be available every Sunday during Advent. Now is the time to grab your holiday shopping list and browse the new ELCA Good Gifts catalog, Each of these gifts has the remarkable capacity to transform lives...all in God's name.



Church Council Highlights November 2024

The Church Council met on November 16th to discuss a variety of agenda items, including this year's stewardship campaign, the ongoing work of committees, and plans for Living Water's 25th anniversary celebration.

By the time you read this, the annual stewardship campaign will be wrapping up. The Stewardship committee worked to prepare temple talks, the informational insert in Connections, and letters to members with pledge cards and other information. Generosity Sunday was November 24th. If you have not yet returned a pledge card with your giving intentions for 2025, please do so as soon as possible. Your pledges help the council create a budget for the upcoming year.

Council Treasurer Steve Umland did a temple talk on Living Water's current financial condition. As of the end of October, offerings were running behind budget and expenses were positive to budget. November and December are usually good months for offerings.

The Audit committee has completed the 2023 audit. Thanks to continuous monitoring, the committee found no problems with the church's financial functions.

About 60 people attended the 2nd Annual Volunteer Appreciation luncheon. This is a fun time for fellowship. Thanks to all who prepared and served the meal.

Ten people joined Living Water on All Saints' Sunday, and on November 10th we welcomed a wonderful group of young people through the Rite of Confirmation. Our atmosphere of welcome and inclusiveness is thanks to all of you.

Plans for Living Water's 25th Anniversary are taking shape. There will be a dinner and celebration at Troon North Country Club on Sunday, April 27th, at 5:00pm. Founding pastor Tim Selbo will be the keynote speaker. He will also preach that morning. Watch for more information in Connections and Splash! Reservations for the dinner will begin in January.



25th Anniversary

Living Water
Lutheran Church

Sunday, April 27

10:00am Worship at Living Water

5:00pm Dinner at Troon North Golf Club

Stay tuned for more details.



HOW TO BE AN ANGEL

As we have for several years, we who wish to be angels, will be gifting children who are receiving services from the inner-city service charity, Nourish Phoenix. On Sunday November 24th and the following two Sundays, the Angel Tree will be in our church Narthex. The tree will be decorated with wooden angels lovingly crafted by our committee. Each angel will have a label attached to it with the child's name, gender, age, gift ideas, and sizes for shoes and clothing (Child identifier label).

1.) Choose your child (or children) and **take the angel off the tree.**

-The **angel is for you** to hang on your own Christmas tree, because **you are an angel!**

2.) Next, take one of the blue LWLC **blue canvas bags** (near the Angel tree).

3.) Then purchase the gifts for your child. Do not exceed **\$50/child.**

4.) Put your gifts in the LWLC blue bag and **tie** the **child identifier label, (NOT the wooden angel)** to the **handle** of the bag. Do **not wrap** the gifts.

5.) Bring your filled bag back and put it under the Angel Tree **by December 8th.**

The Angel Team will put your gift bags into large family bags on December 8th, after the church service. Then we will attach a **new Angel (not yours)** so that each recipient family will get an Angel along with your gifts.

Plan ahead to join us for a
Candlelight Christmas Eve
worship service on
Tuesday, December 24th:

4:00pm (*family service*)

6:00pm (*traditional service*)



JOIN US TO MAKE LEFSE IN DECEMBER



Joan Sprinkle has again graciously offered her home in NE Scottsdale, and we'll provide hands-on instructions for rolling and frying Lefse (lef'-suh), Norwegian flatbread made from potatoes, butter & cream, and flour, traditionally made during the

holidays. We can accommodate 10 persons per session so everyone can have a "hands-on" experience. **Sunday, December 8 at 2 pm and Monday, December 9, at 2 pm.** Reserve your spot on the sign-up sheet in the church entryway or by contacting the Ullands

myrna.ulland@gmail.com) or Joan Sprinkle (joansprinkle@cox.net) today!

Piecemakers Quilting December



Join us on December 4 and 18

Come and tie quilts with us! Our quilting primarily supports Lutheran World Relief (LWR), and we also make quilts for refugee families and our high school graduates. We meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, from 9 am to about noon, in the Education Building on the first floor. Bring your own water or coffee for a mid-morning break. If you're a winter visitor who likes to quilt, come and tie with us. If you like to sew, we can provide pre-cut squares to make quilt tops. We also accept donations of 100% cotton appropriate for quilting work, as well as donations to purchase batting. Many hands make light work! Questions? Ask Lynda Cales, Kay Bonar, Mary Nyberg, Cindy Ophaug, Lois Lucas or Myrna Ulland. Learn more about this ministry at www.lwr.org

Annual Tamale Sale

Our amigas at La Sagrada Familia are offering their fabulous homemade tamales for sale again this year, to be delivered December 22nd.

This year the choices will include red chili with meat, green chili with chicken, and tamales with cheese. They will be priced at \$30/dozen or \$15/half dozen. A sign up sheet will be available at church on the first two Sundays in December, or you may email your order with the quantity of each variety that you want to Kristin Smith at kaos_52@me.com.

Tamales will be available to pick up on Sunday, December 22.

Dennis Nelson Bible Study

Weekly, published on our YouTube Channel
Wednesdays at NOON
Bible Study Outlines available on
our website: lwlcaz.org

Men's Bible Breakfast

We meet on Thursdays at 8:00am

Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center

7415 East Elbow Bend Rd.

Carefree, AZ 85377

\$7 for breakfast

Family Sunday School returns this fall with the



curriculum entitled "Simply Loved." We will be exploring a Jesus-centered journey through God's story of Love. Our fall semester will focus on one simple Bible Point and Bible Verse:
*Bible Point - "Jesus helps people in need."

*Bible Verse - "Give all your worries and cares to God for he cares about you." (1 Peter 5:7)



▪ **Sunday, December 8, 9:00am – Jesus Feeds People**

We will meet in the Matthew/Mark classrooms in the Education Building. All families with children ages two through sixth grade are welcome to participate.



Vista del Camino Thanksgiving Food Drive 2024

This year the congregation filled 44 grocery bags with food for Thanksgiving dinners. Added to the bags of food were \$1,100 worth of grocery gift cards and \$575 cash to provide turkeys or hams. Many families rely on Vista del Camino food bank, and they in turn, rely on the generosity of the community. Thank you for your support!



Tuesday Women's Bible Study

Join us on any Tuesday morning at 10 am in the Fellowship Hall, or at 10 am via Zoom, to continue our study of the Gospel of Matthew. We're using material from New Testament scholar, N.T. Wright.

No prior knowledge of the Bible is needed, and you don't have to be Lutheran either. Come as you can, bring a friend and your favorite Bible

translation. The coffee and hot water for tea/hot chocolate will always be on. Occasionally we also have a little treat. We meet for approximately 90 minutes on Tuesday mornings. If you're not receiving our Tuesday Women email communications, please notify [myrna.ulland@gmail](mailto:myrna.ulland@gmail.com) to be added. Our December schedule will be December 3rd through the 17th. We'll take a holiday break on December 24 and December 31.

Thank you for your generosity. Your generosity makes a difference and is helping change lives. Thank you for believing in the mission of Living Water and helping us to continue our ministry.

If you are looking for an easy way to give a financial gift via your phone, see QR code below to access Living Water's online giving platform.



*Thank
You*

How you can help



In late September, Hurricane Helene hit the coast of Florida as a Category 4 hurricane, ravaging communities in the southeast, from Florida to Virginia. As the floodwaters have started to recede, the extreme devastation — especially in North Carolina and Tennessee — has become clearer. Entire towns, roads and bridges have been washed away, and millions are without power and cell service.

Whatever unfolds because of this storm, Lutheran Disaster Response will be there. Lutheran Disaster Response has strong relationships in the region and is already at work on the ground. Working alongside synods and other partners, Lutheran Disaster Response is prepared to provide support throughout the impacted region. We anticipate that our greatest impact will be reaching those in underserved and rural areas.

Gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response equip us to respond to those affected by hurricanes and related disasters, such as mudslides, severe storms and flooding. These gifts also empower us to respond to disasters whenever and wherever they strike. Gifts to “Hurricane Response” will be used in full (100%) to assist those affected by hurricanes, until the response is complete.

To give by phone, call 800-638-3522.

Checks can be made out to Living Water Lutheran Church. In memo line, please write “Hurricane Response.”

December Birthdays!

Henri	Breault	12/6
Stephen	Page	12/7
Doris	Yock	12/9
Sue	Brash	12/11
Bill	Laudenschlager	12/12
Jay	Hoening	12/13
Maren	Titmas	12/14

Dennis	Nelson	12/18
Vince	Augenstein	12/19
Jban	Sprinkle	12/20
Rbn	Westergaard	12/21
Rich	Cote	12/23
Marilyn	Goesling	12/23
Yvonne	Weber	12/30



Please call the office if your birthday is not listed and we will make sure to enter it into our database.

PUBLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINES:
Connections Newsletter - Every Tuesday by NOON
SPLASH! Newsletter - The 20th of each month by NOON

The Living Water
QR code for giving:



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Living Water is a Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Grand Canyon Synod.